Freebairn, Adam L
The mountain heights

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The Mountain Heights

and other Poems

By the Author of

"My Son" - "Kootenai Brown" and other Western Poems

∴ *By* ∴

A. L. FREEBAIRN

PINCHER CREEK - - - - ALBERTA

Dedicated To My Wife

Laura Wright Freebairn

Who has had to listen to this for 35 years.

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The Mountain Heights

For years I've loved the mountains
With their towering peaks so grand,
And wondered if they rose like that
At God's supreme command.
If the Crow's Nest and the Castle
Were shaped like that by chance,
Or if the World's Great Architect
Designed them in advance.

Then as I sat and pondered
On God's handiwork anew,
The lessons taught by Nature
Ever less mysterious grew.
For there's little to accomplish
Once you've gained the topmost peak;
There is seldom real contentment
When you reach the goal you seek.

Where the mountains rise the highest
There are canyons dark and deep;
You will find the rocks more treacherous
As you near the mountain's peak.
So the man that is most brilliant
And attains to greatest fame
Oft times falls the very lowest
When disgrace attacks his name.

When a storm blows in the mountains,
With its drifting cold and snow,
When a thunder storm is breaking
O'er this trembling world below,
It is on the highest mountain peak
It seems to vent its spite;
It is on some lonely pinnacle
It breaks with all its might.

So it is among us mortals
Who are struggling through this life;
The man attaining greatest heights
Is centre of most strife;
While the lowly humble toiler
With his duty done each day,
Is much happier and contented,
Far less apt to go astray.

If a man will do his duty,
Use the talents he has got,
He need not crave for riches,
For he has what some have not—
The good will of his fellow man,
A sense of duty done;
And the hope of life eternal
In the life that's yet to come.

The Dreamer

Give me a horse and saddle,
And the old-time open range,
Let me drift on some prairie trail
Through valleys wild and strange.
Give me a chance to live my life
In the land that was made by God;
'Ere yet the vandal hand of man
Hath touched to mar or rob.

Give me an old log cabin
In a valley among the pines,
And let me live as I want to live,
Where the western sunlight shines.
Give me the glorious sunsets
When the peaks are tipped with gold,
Or the mountain range at dawning,
Rose tinted, stark, and bold.

Give me the soul of the "Dreamer,"
And the power to wield my pen,
That I may write with the fiery zeal
That sways the souls of men.
Give me the understanding,
Not that I crave for gold,
But let me write, as I'd like to write,
The tales of the days of old.

Wonderful Waterton

Waterton, thy matchless beauty,
Mountain scenes so rich and grand,
Thrill my soul with inspiration
To extol thy wondrous land.
Where in all this great Dominion,
Stretching far from coast to coast,
Could I find a scene more fitting
For a poet's pen to boast.

Mountain peaks uplifted proudly,
Towering grandly towards the sky,
Trickling streamlets falling softly
From the heights where eagles fly;
Rushing torrents thund'ring madly
Through the canyon's narrow gore;
Swelling waters that are destined
Towards a distant eastern shore.

Virgin forests, where the wild life
Roam through valleys dark and deep,
Verdant hillsides bright with blossom,
Pasture of the big horn sheep.
Crystal lakes hid 'tween the mountains,
Teeming with their speckled trout,
Trails that lead through mountain passes
Shutting all this world's strife out.

Lakes whose depths are still unfathomed,
Green as Ireland's Emerald Isle,
Mirror back in pastel pictures
Mountain peaks for mile on mile.
Trails that lead from Akamina,
Cameron Falls so strong and fast,
Wonder spot Hell Roaring Canyon—
Works of Nature, unsurpassed.

Wondrous land of lake and mountain,
Nations yet of men unborn
Will enjoy their rugged grandeur
'Midst those valleys wild and lorn.
Works of men seem so insipid—
Landscaped gardens wasted toil,
When compared with God's own garden
Fashioned from the virgin soil.

The Lone Pine

A stunted pine, it stands alone,
Tormented by the gale
That sweeps from out the mountain pass,
Along the Sun Dance Trail.
Its gnarled trunk, like Pisa's Tower,
Lists sadly towards the morn,
The branches sagging in the lee,
But make it more forlorn.

Yet only it, of all its kind,
Survives against the blast,
To prove that once the pine trees claimed
This crest in ages past.
And still each year it flaunts its pines,
Though fewer than they've been,
And further still upon the plains
Its progeny are seen.

The sheltered valleys of the Crow
Boast millions of its kind,
While its poor roots among the rocks
Scant nourishment can find.
But which of all the lordly pines,
Protected in the vale,
Has sown its seedlings half so far
Along the Sun Dance Trail.

Poor vagrant, battling in the blast
Upon this rocky crest,
While others of thy kindred thrive
At Nature's ample breast.
Thy struggle has not been in vain,
For down the trail below
Stands many a lusty seedling
From the lone pine near the Crow.

The Old Cottonwood Tree

It's only a lonely old cottonwood tree,
But to me it is dearer by far
Than the monarchs that grow in the valleys beyond,
Where the wealth of the great forests are.
It's broken and bent by the force of the storm,
And its branches are rugged and bare,
But there's a dignity yet, in that wreck of a tree,
And I love it beyond all compare.

There's the blaze of an axe on its old weathered trunk,
A mark that for ages will last,
To show that some pioneer camped 'neath its shade
In the dangerous days of the past.
But now it's the goal for the children at play,
Where they romp in their innocent glee,
Or a tryst in the gloaming for love's first embrace—
What a wonderful cottonwood tree.

When our children are scattered like birds that have flown
And perhaps building nests of their own,
With remembrance born in the depths of the heart,
They will think of the old days at home,
And fondly they'll cherish the thoughts of the past,
For forgotten they never can be,
Where as children they played, through the long summer days,
By the great big old cottonwood tree.

THE RADIO

Perhaps some day, when I'm old and grey,
And the youngsters have homes of their own,
I'll be able to go to the radio
And strangle its blatant tone;
Then I'll sit and rest, as I like to best,
In my favorite old arm chair,
While the press reviews give the current news
From the stations everywhere.

To do it now, would create a row;
The family want some jazz,
Or to hear Fred Allen handing out
Jack Benny's weekly razz;
So I sadly wait till it's far too late,
And I miss the evening news,
While some crazy loon on a big bassoon
Plays the latest kind of blues.

The nightly run of alleged fun
By those artists on the air
Nearly drive me mad, for they're just as bad
As the jazz band's noisy blare;
And my own home folks think I'm just a joke,
That I'm sadly out of date,
When I fuss and rave that I want the wave
For the news e'er it's yet too late.

But perhaps some day, when they're far away,
And the house is hushed and still,
I'll miss the noise of those girls and boys
That brought life's greatest thrill;
And Mother, I know, will slyly go
And turn on the jazz of yore;
Then we'll sit and dream of what has been,
'Till I miss the news once more.

The Canadian Rockies

Beyond the "Pass of Setting Suns"
Their mighty ramparts rise,
And throw their silver-crested peaks
Triumphant toward the skies.
Unconquered by the hand of time,
Primeval as of yore,
The Rockies stand, as once they stood,
Beside a wave-kissed shore.

Long 'ere the genesis of man
Was spawned by Mother Earth,
These rugged rocks had been upthrust
To wait the mankind's birth.
They girt the shores of ancient seas
That never knew a name,
They watched a million years transform
Those seas into a plain.

Beneath their towering pinnacles,
In many a lush clad bay,
The prehistoric dinosaurs
Found shelter in their day—
Until a cataclysmic wave,
Chaotic in its time,
The glacial ice cap of the North
Spread o'er this tropic clime.

Defiant of the Northland's grip,
Their mighty barriers held
Until the changing clime once more
The glacial ice repelled.
But high on many a canyon wall
The Ice King's brand is seen,
Deep chiseled in eternal rock,
To prove where he has been.

Still in their majesty and might
Those glorious ramparts rise,
And flaunt their silver-crested peaks
Against the Western skies.
And likewise, on the canyon wall,
The mankind leaves his brand,
So future ages too may read
God's will to understand.

The Valley Among The Hills

There's a trail that winds o'er the Sun Dance Flat,
From the prairie lands below,
To a sheltered valley among the hills,
Near the mountains of the "Crow" —
A little bit of the old time West,
'Mid scenes that still enthrall
Those men who love the nomad's life
And hear the "Loneland's call."

A little bit of the old time West,
At the end of the Sun Dance Trail,
Where man meets man in fellowship
With a smile and a friendly hail;
Where the blood-red sun, at eventide,
Sinks behind the mountain range
In a glory that gilds the crested peaks,
With a hush that is wierd and strange.

A sheltered spot among the hills,
Where soft Chinook winds blow,
And rivers dash, 'tween rocky banks,
Where pine and poplar grow.
The hillsides decked with rose and thorn,
The prairie gay in flower,
And o'er this wild, enchanting scene
The mighty mountains tower.

Though distant fields be ever green,
And strange trails may allure,
The beauties of a southern clime
Compared with these are poor;
The sheltered vale, the Sun Dance Trail,
Where laughing waters flow,
The willowed bank, the canyon wall,
The Mountains of the Crow.

The Man Who Looks For Rain

Weary, toilworn and discouraged,
With a wistful longing eye,
He looks toward the distant mountains
'Neath the blazing summer sky.
Parched is the prairie bunchgrass,
Seared are his fields of grain;
Oh God, hast Thou forgotten
The man who looks for rain.

Years of toil and hardship
Breaking the prairie sod,
Scraping a meagre living
From what was a man-sized job.
Hauling logs from the mountains,
Herding his stock on the plain,
Building a home for his family,
The man who looks for rain.

Prosperous years when Nature
Smiled upon Mother Earth,
He sold his crops and bought more land
For more than the land was worth.
Ignoring the old, old lesson,
What goes up must come down again,
Gambling too much on the future,
The man who looks for rain.

Drouth returns to the prairie,
The cycle is seven years;
His last two crops were a failure,
Yet in spite of all his fears,
He stripped, he summerfallowed,
And he seeded it all again;
Oh God, reward his courage—
The man who looks for rain.

Life's Pathway

Could I recall the flight of time,
Those years so swiftly sped,
Since I was but a lad at school—
Life's pathway still ahead—
More eagerly I'd strive to learn
Whate'er the teacher taught.
Life's lessons from experience
Are later dearly bought.

'Tis knowledge builds man's confidence,
And confidence, success.
If you'd aspire to place and fame,
These attributes possess:
Be diligent, my boy, at school,
And study while you may,
No knowledge ever yet was lost—
You'll need it all some day.

The paths of life are seldom strewn
With roses rich and rare,
And if perchance you find a rose,
Beware, the thorns are there.
And as you sow, so shall you reap—
You'll find this maxim true;
'Tis only what you give to life
That life returns to you.

The fool may plan to win success
Upon the wheel of fate;
Experience will folly teach
But then, alas, too late—
My boy, your pathway lies ahead,
The future you possess;
May knowledge build you confidence
And confidence, success.

The Great Highway

I sit at my door, by the side of the road,
And I watch the world go by;
Contented I, to sit and dream
'Neath the blue of the summer sky.
No urge have I to roam afar,
Adventure comes each day;
In every tourist car that speeds
Along the great highway.

I sit at my door, by the side of the road,
And I talk with men who've been
To the further corners of the earth,
And they tell of what they've seen:
The wave kissed strand of a southern land,
The Fjord of a northern sea,
But the Rocky's towering mountain peaks
Are grander still to me.

I sit at my door, by the side of the road,
As the glorious sunset weaves
Its splendors along the mountain range
As if it were loth to leave;
And I'm thankful I'm far too old to know
The urge that makes men roam,
For like me, they might be happier far,
If contented to sit at home.

Next Year Jim

Down from the hills came "Next Year Jim,"
With unkempt hair and bewhiskered chin,
An empty poke and a four months' thirst—
His face all set for another burst.

"Boys," says he, as he hit the bar,
"I've travelled fast and I've travelled far;
I reckon a man must be insane
When he tangles up with this mining game.

"I've mushed the trails for thirty year,
From the Coeur d'Alenes to the Arctic sphere,
Hoping each year to get the break,
But always failing to make a stake.

"There's claims I've staked in the Cariboo
Would make me rich if the road were through;
And I know there's gold on Horsefly Creek,
That's been washed from a lode on Grizzly Peak.

"So I'll hit the trail in the early spring—
For you never know what your luck will bring;
And maybe I'll clean up big next year
With a couple of hundred thousand clear.

"Yes, I'll try my luck on the hills once more,
Though it may be again as it has been before—
But I've staked my life that the game will pay
And I know I'll strike it yet some day."

The Old Prospector

It's only an old abandoned mine
At the end of a long, long road,
But it's forty years of Scotty's life
In search of the mother lode.
Forty years of blasted hopes,
Though at times success was near,
And a brave old heart that always said,
I'll strike it rich next year.

He followed the lure of the rainbow trail,
In search of the pot of gold,
From Coeur d'Alene to the River Peace
In the placer days of old.
He mushed the trails of the Cariboo
And staked on Horse Fly Lake;
But he never found the pot of gold,
And he never made his stake.

Well may you ask, what he got from life,
When he never found the lode,
But it only shows that you've never known
The lure of the long, long road.
You've never dwelt in the great outdoors,
Never slept 'neath the evening star,
Or watched the blush of the sun's first ray
On the mountain peaks afar.

He lived his life as it suited him
In the valleys of the West,
Amidst the grandeur of the hills
In the land he loved the best.
And now at the end of the long, long road,
He has crossed the Great Divide
To prospect the hills of the better land
That lie on the other side.

The Old Trails

The Old Trails, the lone trails,
Are gone for evermore,
But many a heart is yearning
For those happy days of yore;
The thrill of new adventure,
The lure of lands unknown,
The vision of the future
That dwells in youth alone.

The Old Trails, the lone trails,
So dear to every heart,
The rumbling covered wagon,
The old Red River cart,
The pleasant smell of wood-smoke,
The evening camp fire's glow,
The hearty trail-made friendships
The old West used to know.

The Old Trails, the lone trails,
Through sunshine and through storm
The Pioneers still struggled
That an Empire might be born;
That British law and justice
Might rule this vast domain,
And future generations
Still carry on their name.

The Old Trails, the lone trails
Grow dimmer year by year,
As age may dim the memory
Of those no longer here;
But we, the generation
Who proudly bear their name,
Give thanks because our fathers
Broke the trails across the plain.

Ride 'Im Cowboy

Ride 'im Cowboy, ride 'im,
Spur 'im up the neck,
Give 'im his head an' let 'im pitch;
That's a buckin' horse, "by heck."
Careful, don' lose your stirrups,
Keep your hand away from that horn,
Stay with 'im, stay with 'im, cowboy,
You're a rider, as sure as you're born.

Ride 'im cowboy, ride 'im,
As long as the cinches hold,
You're the first guy that ever stayed there
Since the day that bronch was foaled.
Don't go to pullin' leather,
Ride 'im straight up like a man;
Stay with 'im, stay with 'im, cowboy,
You're a champion if you can.

Ride 'im cowboy, ride 'im,
He's a bunch-grass buckin' fool,
He could swap both ends on a dollar bill
An' he grunts like an army mule.
Ain't he a holy terror?
I'll say that's a ride worth while;
Stay with 'im, stay with 'im, cowboy.
Oh hell!—he's throwed you a mile!

The Great West

We tightened our belts—and we had to—
They said that the West had gone broke;
We had squandered the wealth of the prairies
('Twas the guys who had got it that spoke.)
They tried to forget they had known us
In the days when they urged us to spend;
We fought years of drouth and depression,
But, by God, we won out in the end.

Take a look at those crops on the prairies,
(You guys, and I hope that you choke);
It's little you knew of this country
When you said that the West had gone broke.
Three hundred and fifty odd millions
In bushels, the wheat crop will run—
A surplus of livestock and fodder,
And our comeback has only begun.

Some clouds have a silvery lining,
But out West, sirs, we line them with gold;
And the East will renew their old friendship
As soon as our wheat crop is sold.
They will take all our money as usual,
And give us a pat on the back,
But you'll find when the boom is all over
The West is left holding the sack.

It's the new wealth we wrest from the prairies
That keeps the Dominion afloat;
But the East with its high-priced protection
Has a habit of rocking the boat.
However, the West's on a comeback,
We have wheat fields and oil fields galore,
So you better behave and quit rocking,
For the Old West's the Great West once more!

Grin

It's easy to grin when your ship has come in,
And you've money to spend with a friend,
But the man that's worth while
Is the man who can smile
When he hasn't a dollar to spend.

When your luck has gone crash and you're plum out
of cash,
When it seems that your best days are o'er,
Dig up the old grin,
It will help you to win—
We've all seen those hard times before.

It's the fellows who whine at their luck all the time
Who break 'neath the worry and strife,
While a contented mind will keep you just primed
To get what is best out of life.

If you're lacking in wealth, but you've still got your
health,
And friends who are steadfast and true—
Well, there's lots of rich guys
Who would certainly prize
The gifts God has given to you.

Lest We Forget

WRITTEN IN THE DARK DAYS OF 1930.

Don't let it happen again.

"Not that it matters to me," says he,
"But somebody let them in,
The Hutterite, the Mennonite,
Aye, the Conchie of every kin;
But the day will come, when the Native Son
Will be called back on the job,
And you'll beg of him, to save your skin,
You will, so help me God."

"Not that it matters to me," says he;
"Still, I did my bit in France
To hold the Hun, from behind a gun,
When he made his big advance.
And across the sea, to my pals and me,
Came this message full of cheer:
'Good luck to you, when you see it through,
There's a welcome waiting here.'

"Not that it matters to me," says he,
Just an unemployed Vet,
"But a meal a day is a damn poor way
For you guys to pay your debt,
And I stand in line for a measly dime
That perchance may buy a bed;
Yes, I who stood in Sanctuary Wood
And saw the streams run red."

"Not that it matters to me," says he,
"For my fighting days are o'er,
But who will stand, at the first command,
When the foe is at the door,
And the day has come, when the Native Son
Must be called back on the job;
Aye, you'll beg of him to save your skin;
You will, so help me God."

What Is This Life?

IN MEMORIAM — DR. J. J. GILLESPIE

What is this life, if there should be
No future in Eternity?
Or while the trials and cares on earth,
If they are not to prove our worth,
To fit us for some future life
Removed from every care and strife?
And so, although my friend has gone,
He is not dead, he's just passed on.

What is this life? Is it our own?
What sin have we, we must atone;
Predestined, as we are, to live,
The circumstances which God did give?
No, life is but a sojourn here
To fit us for a future sphere
Where life once more shall glorious dawn—
He is not dead, he's just passed on.

And what is death, if over there
Eternal life is ours to share?
Or why let sorrow fill the heart?—
It is so short a time we part.
Yea, though the grave now lies between,
His memory shall be ever green,
Until some day we meet beyond—
He is not dead, he's just passed on.

There Will Always Be a Scotland

Cruel blows the blast on Scotland's shore,
From off the Northern Sea,
But still more cruel the thoughtless blast
That takes thy fame from thee.
Did England and her sons alone
Create this Empire wide?
Nay, when they fought for Britain's fame
A Scot fought by her side.

The scrolls of history unfold
Great epics of our race;
Alas, today I scan the news
And scarcely find a trace.
By all the shades of Scotland's dead
Who battled in the past,
Are there none left to carry on;
Has Scotland fought her last?

Throughout our great Dominions
You will find the Scottish name—
The Campbell, the MacDonald,
The Craig, the Kerr, MacLean;
If England built the Empire
The Scotsmen lent a hand,
And now they're sending back their sons
To help the Motherland.

There will always be a Scotland
Dear to the Scottish race,
But when duty calls we're British,
And will bravely take our place.
Unitedly we've fought and won
The right to Britain's fame;
The English, Irish and the Scot
United we'll remain!

St. Andrew's Nicht

Gi'e me the genial company
O' twa three brither Scots;
A drap o' Johnnie Walker,
Weel enuch ta'e wat our throats,
And I will sing o' Scotland,
Her honor an' her fame,
For though I'm far ayont the sea,
My heart is aye at hame.

Whar'er the Scots foregether,
Ta'e the ends o' a' the earth,
This nicht they're met ta'e honor
The land that gave them birth,
An' ties o' hame an' kindred
Vibrate wa'e loyal pride,
In hearts that's lang been exiled
In countries far an' wide.

They say the Scots are clannish,
An' I'll no deny it's true;
In fact that's just the reason
That I'm here this nicht wa'e you;
Ta'e honor auld St. Andrew,
An' drink a drap or twa
Ta'e Scotland, bonnie Scotland,
The grandest o' them a'!

Hame

It's mair than forty years gane by
Since I ha'e been at hame,
And doubtless verra few in Beith
Could ca' me by ma name;
But memories o' boyhood days
Are dear as life tae me,
And often yet my thochts gang back
Tae scenes ayont the sea.

I shut my e'en and see again
The playpark at the Toll,
Wa'e a' our wee bit jackets heaped
Tae mak the fitba' goal;
But oh, the greatest thrill o' a,
Was when the shows cam roun'
Or Lord George Sanger's circus
Wis paradin' through the toon.

I mind just whaur we dookit
In the loch doon near the Dibs,
And like as no without a rag
Tae hide our scrawny ribs.
The Maich whaur we went fishin'
Wae a bottle on a string,
For the minnows and the pinheads
In the hole below the spring.

The "Auld Kirk" and the boilers
In front o' Samal Kerr's,
The Backburn and the Folly,
Whaur we'd scamper doon like hares;
The smiddy in the New Street,
That taigled us frae schill,
And Foster waitin' wae the taws
When we went up the hill.

A hunner memories o' the past
Come croodin' through ma brain,
O' scenes in "Bonnie Scotland"
That I'll never see again;
The heather-covered Bigholm Hills,
The muckle rockin' stane,
The Brimmer whaur we herrit nests
Till feart tae venture hame.

The boys I went tae schill wae
And the lassies tae, sae braw,
I'm aye sae prood to hear o' them
(Sad when they're ta'en awa);
And though I've five Canadians
I'm prood to ca' ma ain,
My thochts are oft in Scotland
Wae the freens I left at hame.

Let Us Borrow From Tomorrow

If today is full of trouble
And the skies above be grey,
Let us borrow from tomorrow
For our happiness today.
Let us borrow from tomorrow,
Then tomorrow we can pay;
For our troubles will have vanished
In our happiness today.

Clouds at times may dim the sunshine,
And the skies above be grey,
Yet, beyond the sun is shining
Just as steadily each day.
If we've courage in the future
Everything will come alright,
And behind the clouds of trouble
Life will still be just as bright.

Let us borrow from tomorrow,
Then tomorrow we can pay,
For our troubles will have vanished
In our happiness today.

Sprig O' Heather

Just a sprig o' purple heather
Frae a hillside o'er the sea,
But it brings me kindly memories
Of a land that's dear tae me.
It minds me of auld Scotland
And the tongue my forebears spoke,
And oh, but I am longin'
For my hame and my ain folk.

Tae me it is an emblem
O' a' that's great and grand,
And in fancy's flicht I see again
My dear auld native land—
A land o' loch and mountain,
Of glen and rugged rock,
And o' bit I am longin'
For my hame and my ain folk.

A land whose fighting clansmen
Ha'e often proved their worth;
A land whose sons ha'e pioncered
The farthest spot on earth.
Lang may this wee bit emblem,
The pride of race invoke,
And o' bit I am longin'
For my hame and my ain folk.

To Laura

***On** Winning the Dominion Medal in Her Class.*

Lang may yer elbow jink and jiggle
Wae richt guid will,
And bring ye honors wae yer fiddle
Mair brilliant still.
But gin ye learn Italian airs,
Wi' a' their art,
And play the auld Scotch sangs nae mair,
Ye'll break my heart.

I watch yer fingers jump and jook
Amang the strings,
Until it seems yer mind's forsook
A' earthly things.
Then frae yer heart comes some refrain
Sae dear tae me,
It takes me back tae boyhood's hame
Ayont the sea.

They foreign tunes that birl and twirl
Sic feckless ways,
Losh, me, they hav'na got the dirl
Of Scotch Strathspeys,
Nor can this syncopated clatter
E'er tak the place
O' guid auld tunes like Afton Water,
Dear tae our race.

Guid guide ye through life's hubble bubble,
An' gi'e ye sense
Tae step aside frae every trouble,
Likewise pretense.
And may ye ne'er forget yer bluid,
Or shame its name,
But play the tunes yer forbears did,
Tae greater fame.

—HER DAD.

To Mrs. Wm. Christopherson

(LAURA)

September 4th, 1937.

My lassie, you're leavin' yer ain folk
Ta'e build a bit nest o' yer ain,
Weel' yer Mither an' I canna blame ye,
Lang syne, 'losh, we baith did the same.
An' Lassie, we never ha'e rued it,
Though we've whiles had a hantle o'care,
But the burden is never too heavy
When there's twa hearts, the burden ta'e share.

The hoose will be lonely with oot ye,
For ye've aye been sa'e dear ta'e us a';
Mind, I'm tellin' the lad ye ha'e merrit,
He's gi'e lucky ta'e get ye ava,'
But we ken he'll be guid ta'e ye Lassie,
And love ye aye fondly an true;
Deed we've aye been real fond o' the laddie,
Since he first cam aroun' courtin' you.

My Lassie, you're leavin' yer ain folk
And if baith o' ye's honest an' true,
There's never a care nor a worry
That true love will no see ye through.
Have confidence aye in each ither,
And share every trouble an' care,
Be jist like yer Faither an' Mither,
An' I don't think I need ta'e say mair.

To Mother

(In Memory of Mrs. John Freebairn, who Died August 7th, 1926)

Just a sprig o' purple heather
Frae a hillside o'er the sea—
But I've seen my mother gaze at it
Till tears wad blin' her e'e.
Tae her, it was an emblem
O' a' that's great and grand,
For it brocht her kindly memories
O' hame and native land.

The Rockies tae the west o' here,
I'm shair in fancy's flicht
Was often in her dreaming,
The Ayrshire hills at nicht,
Whaur, when she was but a lassie
She had ran about the braes,
And little thocht sae far frae them
She'd hae tae end her days.

An early settler in the West,
When neighbors here were few,
She had many a weary struggle
That her auld friends never knew.
But the grace o' God was wae her,
And she was spared tae be
Baith happy and contented,
Wae her grandweans at her knee.

Noo, she's sleeping 'neath the heather,
Though it's in a foreign land,
For I stood beside her coffin
Wae a' wee sprig in my hand—
And just before they lowered it,
I placed it on her breast,
And I'm shair that she was watching,
Frae the regions o' the blest.

A New Year's Greeting To My Friends

Each year is but another page
In God's great book of life;
Deface it not with vain regrets,
Discouragement or strife.
But if you would a record leave,
When life's great story ends,
Inscribe upon its every page,
I'm happy in my friends.

I scan each yearly page again,
From early childhood through;
I see again my native land,
Its hills of purple hue.
And then the great wide prairie
As I joined the Western trend.
Aye, I'm happy to have learned to call
The Pioneer my friend.

Among the pages of the past,
As oft I turn them o'er,
I see so many well-loved names
Alas, that are no more;
But memories of their friendship
All other thoughts transcend;
Yes, I'm happy to remember
That I knew them as a friend.

And as I turned the pages o'er
I happened on your name,
An old time friend, a new-found friend,
A dear friend just the same.
So I'm sending you this greeting,
That so happily I've penned,
To wish you a Merry Christmas
And a Guid New Year, my friend.

My Son

I clasped his hand and I said good-bye,
With a lump in my throat and a tear in my eye,
But he laughed it off, as a boy will do;
"Well, so long, Dad, I'll be seeing you."

A little chap in Air Force blue,
But with courage, thank God, to see it through,
And I felt real proud that a boy of mine.
Would be doing his bit at the present time.

I just could not pray for God to save
My boy while some other youngster gave
His life to stem the Nazi flood—
For war is war and the toll is blood.

But within my heart I hoped that mine
Would be spared from that sacrifice sublime,
And though once his plane came limping home
He was saved when it crashed at a friendly drome.

Now his tour's complete, with an extra run,
He has done his bit in the victories won;
And he sent me word, like I hoped he'd do,
"Hi you, Dad, I'll be seeing you."

PS
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Freebairn, Adam L
The mountain heights

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